Fear & Dread
The Buddha's Journey Through
the Forest of the Mind
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‘The forests seem to rob the mind.’

Remote lodgings in the wilderness and the forest are challenging. It’s hard to maintain seclusion and hard to find joy in solitude.

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The True Source of Fear

Ascetics with unpurified conduct... summon unskillful fear and dread because of these defects.

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A Foundation of Virtue

- Purified Body
- Purified Speech
- Purified Mind
- Purified Livelihood

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A Mind Unhindered

- Free of Desire
- A Heart Full of Love
- Gone Beyond Doubt
- Energetic & Mindful
- Accomplished in Wisdom

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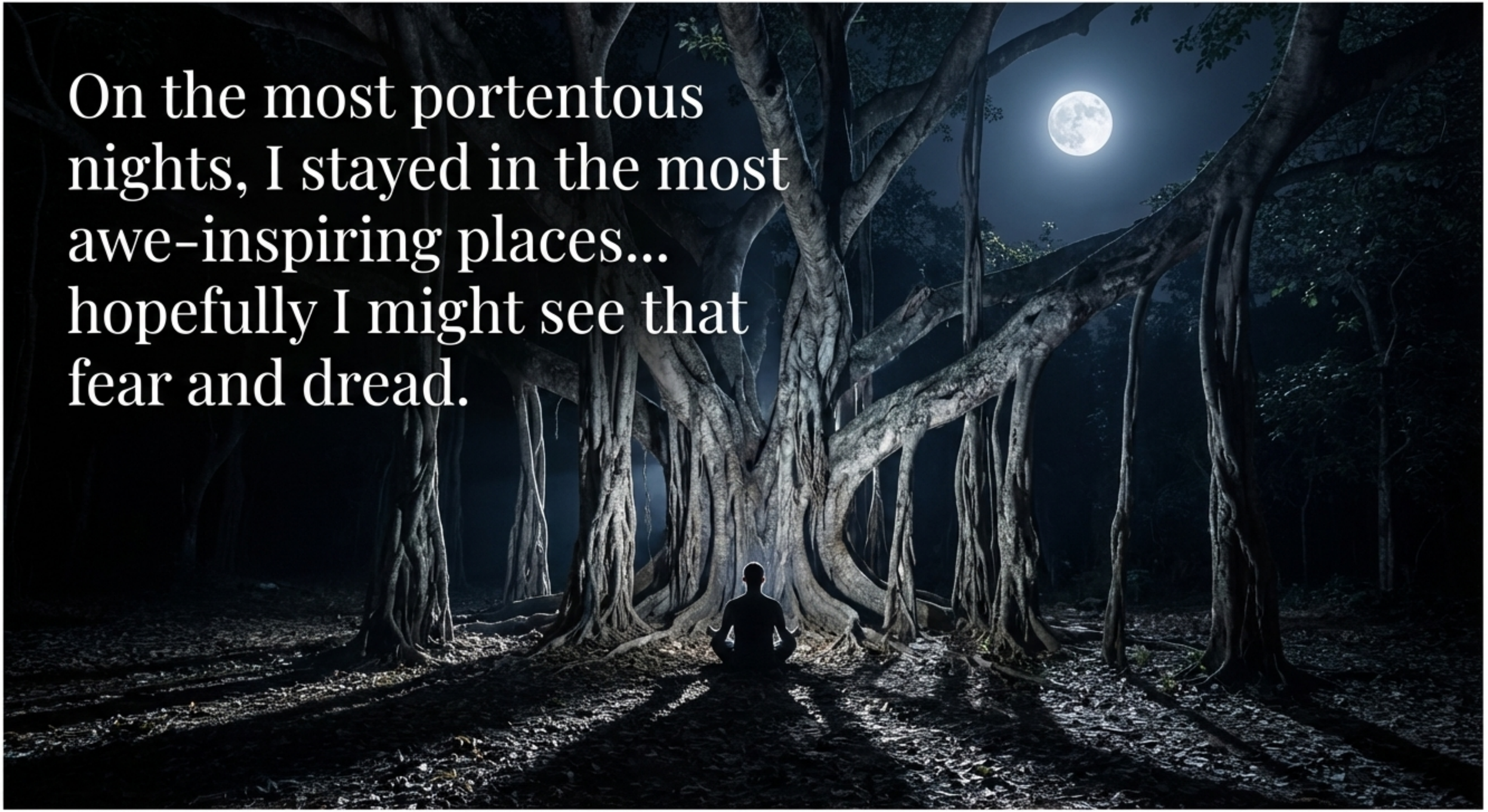
On the most portentous nights, I stayed in the most awe-inspiring places... hopefully I might see that fear and dread.

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The Fear Arrives. I Do Not Flinch.

When fear came while walking, I walked until it was gone. When it came while standing, I stood. When it came while sitting, I sat. When it came while lying down, I lay down.

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A Mind Immersed and Unified

My energy was roused, my mindfulness established,
my body tranquil, and my mind immersed in samādhi.

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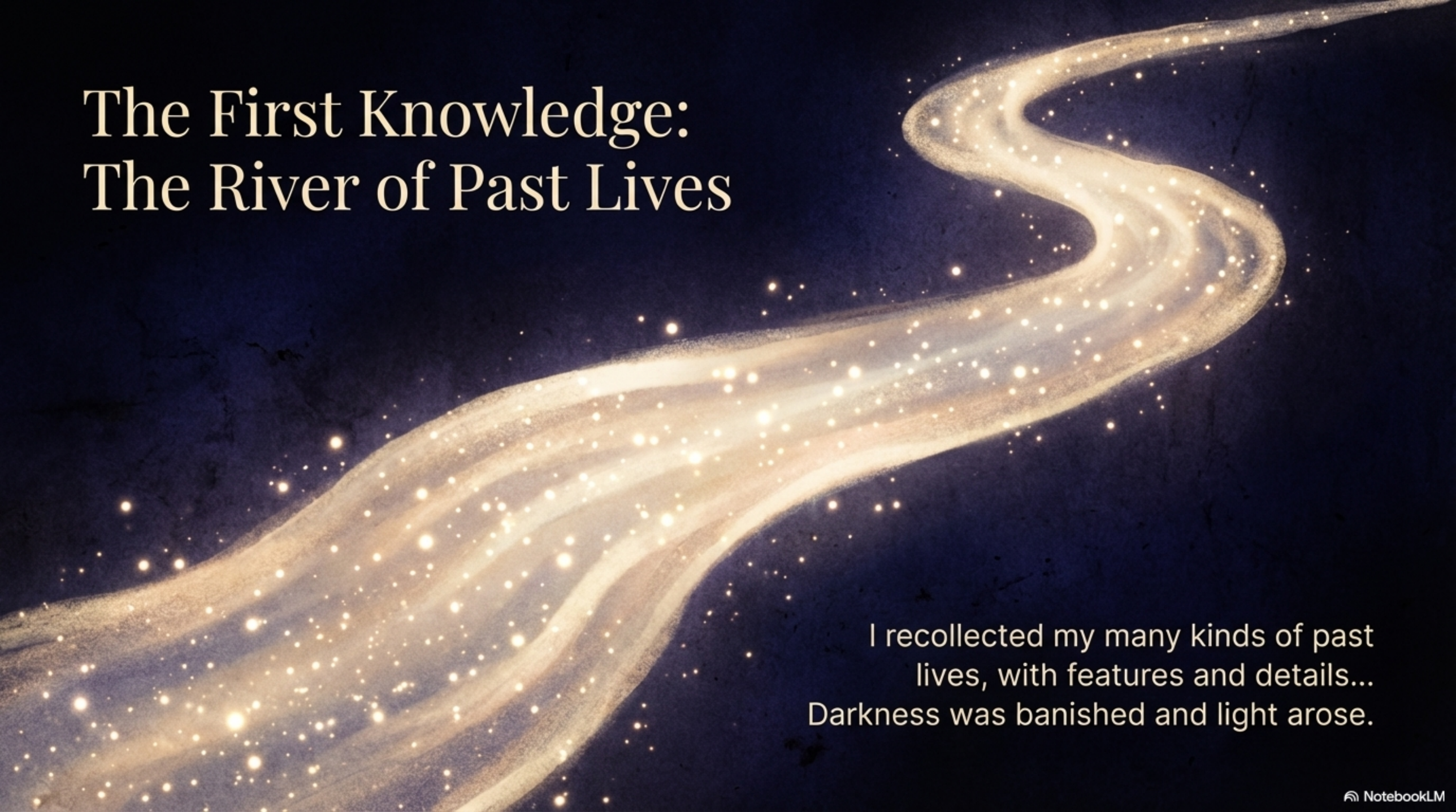
The First Knowledge: The River of Past Lives



I recollected my many kinds of past lives, with features and details... Darkness was banished and light arose.

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The Second Knowledge: The Web of Karma

I saw sentient beings passing away and being reborn...
and understood how they pass on according to their deeds.

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The Third Knowledge: The End of Suffering

My mind was freed. I understood: ‘Rebirth is ended... what had to be done has been done, there is nothing further for this place.’”

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Why Remain in the Forest?

I see two reasons:
Happiness for myself in this life,
and sympathy for future generations.

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Excellent, worthy Gotama! As if you were righting the overturned, or revealing the hidden, or lighting a lamp in the dark so people with clear sight can see what's there. As I

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